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September 30, 2008

TO: Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Chair
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Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe *Wendy L. Watanabe*
Acting Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – PHOENIX
HOUSE, INCORPORATED – PHOENIX ACADEMY LAKEVIEW
TERRACE GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Phoenix Academy Lakeview Terrace Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Phoenix House, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Phoenix Academy Lakeview Terrace Group Home is a 120-bed facility, which provides care for children ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, the Group Home was providing services for eight DCFS children, 57 Probation children, two Santa Clara County children and 36 privately placed children.

The Group Home is located in the Third District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to address several deficient areas.

Phoenix Academy Lakeview Terrace Group Home needs to clean and make repairs in the kitchen and bathrooms. The Group Home also needs to include input from all members of the treatment team and the child in the development of the Needs and Services Plans, provide children with sufficient recreational activities and opportunities to participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest.

In addition, the Group Home needs to maintain current court authorizations for children taking psychotropic medications, provide children with fair discipline policies, allow children to contact their placement workers in private and provide children with timely and appropriate medical and dental care. The Group Home also needs to provide children with sufficient variety of properly prepared meals, sufficient quantity of clothing and encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

WLW:MMO:DC:CC:asl

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Susan Kerr, Senior Deputy Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Gary LeMel, Board President, Phoenix House, Incorporated
Mary Kay Gerski, Executive Director, Phoenix House, Incorporated
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Phoenix House, Incorporated
Phoenix Academy Lakeview Terrace Group Home
Lakeview Terrace, California 91342
License Number: 191222731
Rate Classification Level: 5/12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Phoenix Academy Lakeview Terrace Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

Overall, the interior of the Group Home is well maintained. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the kitchen floor is dirty and the stoves are dirty and broken. The floor drains are not working properly in the dishwashing area and there is standing water on the floor. In some of the children's bathrooms, the sinks and toilets are dirty.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

1. Phoenix House management:

- a. Clean the kitchen floor.**
- b. Repair and clean the kitchen stoves.**
- c. Repair the drains in the dishwashing area and remove the standing water from the floor.**

d. Clean the sinks and toilets in the children's bathrooms.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Twenty-three

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, comprehensive and include short and long term goals. However, input from all members of the treatment team and the child is not included in the development or implementation of the NSPs.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

- 2. Phoenix House management include input from all members of the treatment team and the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Twenty-three

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Twenty-three

Comments:

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. However, the Group Home does not provide children with sufficient recreational activities. In addition, all the children are not able to participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

3. Phoenix House management:

- a. Provide children with additional recreational activities.
- b. Provide all children with opportunities to participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist. However, not all children have current court authorizations for the psychotropic medications that they are taking.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medications and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

4. Phoenix House management maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Interviews with children

Sample size: Twenty-three

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail and have private visitors. Children attend religious services of their choice. However, children report that calls to their placement workers are not held in private and they are not allowed to call their placement workers as needed.

Children report that the discipline policies enforced are not always fair. Children report that other children often get consequences for the inappropriate behavior of one child.

Children report that the variety of food choices is limited and report overall dissatisfaction with the quality and quantity of meals served. Children also report that the food does not always taste good and that the food is sometimes overcooked or undercooked. Children report that there is often not enough food for second servings.

Children receive voluntary psychiatric care. However, children report that they do not always receive requested medical and dental care in a timely manner.

Recommendations

5. Phoenix House management:

- a. Allow children to contact their placement workers as needed.**
- b. Ensure privacy when children are calling their placement workers.**
- c. Provide children with fair and appropriate discipline.**
- d. Provide children with a variety of properly prepared food.**
- e. Provide children with sufficient quantities of food.**
- f. Provide children with timely medical and dental care.**

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Twenty-three

Comments:

The Group Home provides items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality. However, one child does not have a sufficient quantity of clothing and is in need of underwear, pajamas, slippers, pants, shirts, a sweater and a jacket.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. However, not all children are encouraged or assisted in creating or maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

6. Phoenix House management:

- a. Provide children with additional clothing items as needed.**
- b. Encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

REVISED: 1-23-2008
Corrective Action Plan

I. Facility and Environment:

1. Phoenix House Lake View Terrace management will:

- a. Clean the kitchen floor** – Kitchen floor was immediately cleaned by maintenance staff. Each week the kitchen floor will be cleaned by residents and supervised by Food Services Manager
- b. Repair and clean the kitchen stove** – Facilities Manager will replace the kitchen stove upon obtaining three bids from various vendors. (3/1/08)
- c. Repair the drains in the dishwashing area and remove the standing water from the floor** – Drains were immediately repaired by the maintenance staff.
- d. Clean the sinks and toilets in the children's bathrooms** – Sinks and toilets were immediately cleaned by the maintenance staff.

An extensive Maintenance Plan for our facility addressing cleanliness of resident rooms and the common areas of the facility was implemented and will be monitored by the Facilities Manager on a daily basis and through bi-weekly Facility Inspections.

II. Program Services:

1. Phoenix House Lake View Terrace management will:

- a. Include input from all members of the treatment team and the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plan** – Every child is now involved with the development of their Needs and Service Plan. Every Case Conference now documents input given by every member present.

III. Recreation and Activities:

1. Phoenix House management will:

- a. Provide children with additional recreational activities. Provide all children with opportunities to participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest.** – Immediately we implemented an extensive recreational schedule of activities. The Physical Fitness & Outings Manager will monitor resident participation on a monthly basis.

IV. Psychotropic Medication:

1. Phoenix House management will:

- a. Maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medications** – Immediately we put in place a Psychotropic Consents Log Book and the Nurse Manager is responsible for monitoring compliance on a weekly basis.

V. Personal Rights:

1. Phoenix House management will:

- a. Allow children to contact their placement workers as needed** – immediately staff were informed about client's rights to have contact with placement worker.
- b. Ensure privacy when children are calling their placement workers** – a telephone room was implemented giving children privacy when making telephone calls.
- c. Provide children with fair and appropriate discipline** – Phoenix House uses a progressive discipline policy.
- c. Provide children with a variety of properly prepared food** – Identified children now participate in a weekly food services meeting discussing menu options.

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Phoenix House

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- e. *Provide children with sufficient quantities of food* – Breakfast & lunch meals fall under the Federal regulations on portion amounts. More education with children will occur to improve their understanding of dietary recommendations.
- f. *Provide children with timely medical and dental care* – Effective November 2007 Mission City Clinic began providing medical services on site every Wednesday. Our dental van comes to the facility every other Thursday.

VI. Clothing and Allowance:

1. Phoenix House management will:

- a. *Provide all children with additional clothing items as needed* – Children's clothing is immediately inventoried by the Case Manager and a scheduled shopping trip is placed within 7 days from their admission.
- b. *Encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books* – Photo albums/Life Books are apart of our program. Will provide staff with more support around engaging children in the activity.

Phoenix Academy takes annual site visits very seriously and immediately addressed the items brought forth in this report. The Quality Assurance Manager and Administrative Director will routinely monitor our continuous compliance with all areas mentioned in this Corrective Action Plan.

Mary Kaye Jerok